

represent 15 percent of the labor force but 17 percent of the long-term unemployed. In contrast, white Americans experience unemployment and long-term unemployment at lower rates than their representation in the labor force. These discrepancies are problems that we cannot sweep under the rug.

The costs of higher education exacerbate the problems of differential investment and unemployment that contribute to the wealth gap. Recent analyses by Mark Kantrowitz, the publisher of FinAid.org found that student loan debt in 2010 surpassed credit card debt for the first time. The report—Trends in Higher Education Series 2010—found that black graduates with bachelor's degrees exceeded other racial and ethnic groups for highest debt. For 2007 to 2008, 27 percent of black graduates with bachelor's degrees had over \$30,500 in debt, compared to only 16 percent of white graduates, 14 percent of Latino graduates and 9 percent of Asian American graduates. The high-cost of college creates a two-fold obstacle for black households to become middle class. Some youth may choose not to attend higher education given the costs, dramatically reducing their income and ability to enter the middle class. Other youth face overwhelming debt that combines with poor job opportunities that make a middle-class lifestyle difficult to obtain.

These studies demonstrate that black families will face serious obstacles to becoming middle class, furthering the wealth gap. High rates of unemployment and college debt will make it difficult for recent graduates to enter the middle class. These difficulties with obtaining well-paying jobs are expected to grow given the discussion of continued cuts in public sector jobs and capital investment in the name of deficit reduction.

So my fellow colleagues, I urge us to address the wealth gap head on. It affects our economy and the well-being of our citizens. Right now, we need to do everything we can to rebuild our economy. We need to fix our economy, and we need to help our citizens who have borne the brunt of the economic crisis recover. Government intervention and investment are needed to make our Nation's economy and households strong again.

#### CONGRATULATING THE FIRST MONTANA TEAM TO QUALIFY FOR THE LITTLE LEAGUE WORLD SERIES.

#### HON. DENNY REHBERG

OF MONTANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 19, 2011*

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, history records important events and the people involved, which, on a grand scale, are significant to us all. But history is also recorded at the local level, and to mark a historic occasion in sports for a team from the great state of Montana, I recognize the Billings BigSky Little League All-Stars who became the first team from Montana to earn the right to compete with the world's best in the Little League Baseball World Series.

In the Northwest Regional Championship game, the Billings Big Sky All-Stars defeated Bend South Little League, from Bend, Oregon, 7-1. The victory gave Big Sky Little League

the regional title and a place in the 16-team field of national and international Regional Champions competing for the 65th Little League World Series Title.

Championships at any level are never given away, they are earned, and not just from one day of competition. Titles are won beginning with a love and respect for the game, a dedication to being the best you can be, and an appreciation for all those who help you reach for your goals.

The Little League logo carries the words, "Character, Courage, Loyalty," helping to promote strong values in our youth and our communities. Congratulations to the players and coaches of the Billings Big Sky Little League All-Stars for coming together in championship form, and for upholding the Little League values in sportsmanship and excellence. Your family, friends, fans and fellow Montanans are proud of your accomplishment.

Billings Big Sky Little League All-Stars: (number, name, positions) 33—Ben Askelson P/C, 45—Sean Jones P/3B, 13—Pearce Kurth P/1B, 22—Brock MacDonald P/OF, 19—Patrick Zimmer P/SS, 2—Jet Campbell 2B, 1—Connor Kieckbusch 2B/OF, 25—Ian Leatherberry IF/P, 24—Dawson Smith 1B/OF, 10—Andy Maehl OF/C, 27—Cole McKenzie OF/IF, 11—Gabe Sulser OF, Gene Carlson—Manager, Mark Kieckbusch—Assistant Coach, Tom Zimmer—Assistant Coach.

#### HONORING THE WILBUR FAMILY

#### HON. TOM MARINO

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 19, 2011*

Mr. MARINO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of my constituents, the descendants of Samuel Rathbone and Mary "Polly" Halstead Wilbur who are celebrating their 125th consecutive annual family reunion in Nicholson, Pennsylvania.

Samuel Rathbone Wilbur was born on December 20, 1782, in Plainfield, Connecticut, and settled in Nicholson, Pennsylvania, in 1805. He was the son of Elizabeth Benjamin and Oliver Wilbur, a Revolutionary War soldier. Mary "Polly" Halstead Wilbur, the daughter of Samuel and Hannah Harding Halstead, was born January 14, 1791, in a log cabin in Nicholson. Polly's father, Samuel, was one of the signers of the 1794 petition asking for the creation of the township of Wilkes-Barre. Polly's grandfather, Isaiah Hallstead, was the scrivener of the petition that formed Nicholson Township in 1795.

Samuel married Polly in 1814. They established a large family in Nicholson, having 10 children. Samuel passed away at the age of 52. Polly, now a single mother, raised all 10 of their children, and lived until the age of 93.

A large percentage of the Nicholson population and the surrounding area is directly attributable to the 10 Wilbur children, their 47 grandchildren, and 84 great-grandchildren. At one time there were so many descendants living in the area that each year for the family reunion the passenger trains of Lackawanna would make a special stop in Nicholson for the masses of people attending the family reunion.

As one of the early pioneer families to settle in Pennsylvania, a considerable number of the Wilbur family descendants have lived in Nich-

olson and the surrounding area for over the past 200 years. The Wilbur reunions are not just a typical gathering to renew acquaintances, but rather a tribute to the preservation of the historic richness of our forefathers.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor this great Pennsylvania family tradition and ask my colleagues to join me in praising the Wilbur's commitment to family, their community, and our nation.

#### RECOGNIZING CARLIE ERDMAN

#### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 19, 2011*

Mr. GRAVES of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise to recognize Mr. Carlie Erdman on the occasion of his 100th birthday celebration. Mr. Erdman was born on August 11, 1911 in a sod house near Benkelman, Nebraska. He arrived in Missouri as soon as he could, though, moving here when he was just two months old. In 1936 he married his late wife, Arlene Thompson, on June 20th.

Mr. Erdman has been a lifelong farmer in Northwest Missouri and a lifelong member of the Lutheran Church. Carlie was my neighbor for as long as I can remember. In fact, he taught my brother Todd and I to water-ski at Big Lake. He spent many gorgeous summer afternoons boating at Big Lake and enjoying the water.

It is amazing, Mr. Speaker, when you stop and look at all the historical events that Carlie has seen firsthand. He saw the Great Depression, Pearl Harbor, the First Man on the Moon, the invention of the computer, the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster, September 11th, and so on.

However, the greatest tribute to Carlie is not his longevity. You see, everyone in Atchison County knows Carlie. He is the first one there if you ever need help, and he is the first one there if you have something to celebrate. It's a tribute to the kind of person Carlie is that if you ask people who know him, they all say the same thing: Carlie is a good man, a good neighbor, and a good friend.

Mr. Speaker, this Sunday Carlie's friends and family will gather to mark this extraordinary occasion. I hope that the whole House will join me in celebrating Carlie's 100th birthday and wishing him good health.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE FARM AID 2011 BENEFIT CONCERT HELD IN SUPPORT OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 19, 2011*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Farm Aid's 2011 benefit concert. Each year, Farm Aid organizes a concert to bring together a wide variety of musicians, farmers and fans for one mission: "keeping family farmers on their land."

Farm Aid board members Willie Nelson, Neil Young, and John Mellencamp established the first Farm Aid concert in 1985 to educate farm

owners about the loss of family farms and to raise funds to keep farm families on their land. Dave Matthews joined the Farm Aid Board of Directors in 2001. The Farm Aid concert is the longest running benefit series concert in America. The organization raised more than \$39 million to endorse a resilient family farm system of agriculture by "promoting food from family farms, growing the Good Food Movement, helping farmers thrive, and taking action to change the system."

Farm Aid 2011 was held at the Livestrong Sporting Park in Kansas City, Kansas, on August 13th. The event showcased homegrown concessions featuring local, organic, or family farm sourced ingredients. The board members, along with other acclaimed artists, helped in promoting the organization and its mission of protecting family owned farms. The board members Willie Nelson, Neil Young, and John Mellencamp, David Matthews along with other artists such as Jason Mraz, Jamey Johnson, Jakob Dylan, Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real, Will Dailey & the Rivals, Billy Joe Shaver, Robert Francis, Ray Price, Rebecca Pidgeon, Heart of Darkness, John Trudell, and the Blackwood Quartet gave their time and talent to help family farmers who are under extreme economic pressure.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognizing Farm Aid 2011 for helping family farmers thrive all over the country while inspiring millions of people to learn about the importance of maintaining family owned farms.

IN OPPOSITION OF BALANCED  
BUDGET AMENDMENTS TO THE  
CONSTITUTION

**HON. DANNY K. DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, August 19, 2011*

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution represents bad economics—pure and simple. To require a balanced budget every year without regard to the state of the economy would threaten to make recessions more frequent, more protracted, and deeper. It would require greater cuts to spending at the time when the Federal Government would be needed most to use countercyclical policies to aid its citizens and states in weathering economic crises. It would jeopardize our nation's credit by making default a more regular likelihood.

A balanced budget amendment is a good sound bite, but it is not good policy. The ability to borrow in a time of crisis to help our states and citizens is a critical tool to aid our nation during economic crisis. A balanced budget requirement risks substantial harm to our economy, to Social Security, to military and civil service retirement systems, to critical government activities, and to our most vulnerable citizens. During economic hardship, federal revenues decline and safety net programs become even more vital lifelines, causing deficits to rise. Rather than allowing the Federal Govern-

ment the flexibility to institute a variety of economic stabilizers, a balanced budget amendment would force the Federal Government to cut benefits or raise taxes exactly when such responses are least effective and more likely to further weaken the economy and result in higher deficits. As Robert Reischauer explained in 1992, a balanced budget amendment "would undermine the stabilizing role of the Federal Government."

I cannot fathom how policymakers would risk default and serious economic damage to our nation in order to make the elderly pay more for medicine, poor children go hungry, and low income students skip college in order to give that money to corporate jet owners, hedge fund agents, wealthy citizens who own multiple homes, and oil companies that already earn tens of billions of dollars in profits.

During times of challenge, I resolutely believe that the mantle of responsibility for caring for the poor and struggling falls squarely on the shoulders of government, not primarily on the charity of individual citizens. In such times of hardship and strife, government leaders should extend help to the needy, not advance the wealth of the most secure. With so many of our children and youth bearing the brunt of our nation's economic hardship, I am committed to protecting all of America, not just the privileged. For these reasons, I resolutely and steadfastly oppose a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.